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AUTHOR King, James W.
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ABSTRACT

Because proven systematic methods of description and analysis are not universally available for the case study methodology in development communication situations, 12 development communication case studies were examined to uncover their organizational schema. Findings were pooled to develop a suggested framework or model for the design of future case studies in development communication. It is argued that case studies should illustrate and provide examples, uncover relationships, and develop suggestions for future action. The following elements were mentioned in 11 or more of the case studies examined: channels, results, project design, objectives, audience, background, overview, scope, location, time/duration, message, and sector. Other categories noted in more than half of the case studies include organization/administration, sponsorship, and evaluation. Nine categories were mentioned in less than half of the case studies surveyed: cost, dissemination, staff, timelines, communication style, research, funding, sources of information, and references. The 28-category model presented includes four additional categories from the literature of development communication: program name and acronym, pretesting, formative evaluation, and monitoring. Thirty-five references are listed. (LMM)

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USING CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY TO DESCRIBE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS

James W. King, Ed.D.

Head, Communication and Training Section

NifTAL Project--MIRCEN
University of Hawaii
Department of Agronomy
and Soil Science
College of Tropical Agriculture
and Human Resources
P.O.Box O
Paia, Maui, HI 96779

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Using Case Study Methodology To Describe Development Communication Programs

In the discipline of development communication, case study methodology has been widely used to describe and investigate activities of communication programs

Proven systematic methods of description and analysis are not universally available for the case study methodology in development communication situations. It falls to the researcher interested in developing a case, to piece together and build a framework for the description of a particular problem.

There are at least two major ways to organize case study data (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). The first is straight description; it uses the theoretical and organizational schema of the discipline itself. The researcher simply employs a classificatory system and describes the case by that particular model. With analytic description, the classificatory system is developed from the data. Thus, new organizational and theoretical models can be developed.

Walton (1972) provides a brief checklist of what a general case study must describe. This includes

> ...longitudinal data from each of several phases- pre-intervention, intervention, and post-intervention;
>
> ...rigorous description of process especially during the intervention phase;
>
> ...conceptualization and theorization about the process itself, e.g. interactions, phases, critical incidents, and their effect on subsequent attitudes and actions. (p. 76)

In this paper twelve development communication case studies will be examined to uncover their organizational schema; these findings will be pooled to form a suggested framework for the design of future case studies in development communication.

Background

Definition of a Case Study. Mouley(1970) writes that a case study is

> "...designed to identify the antecedents responsible in a direct or indirect 'causative' way to the occurence of...the present case..." (p. 347)

Van Dalen (1973) echoes Mouley when he writes that a case study is "an intensive investigation of a social unit" (p. 207) in which the researcher gathers data about the topic of the study, examines the relationships, and then develops the description.

While not defining case study methodology, Kerlinger (1973) does describe ex post facto research as

> "systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have any direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable. Inferences about relations among variables are made, with direct intervention, from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables." (p.379)

Case study methodology is one type of ex post facto study.

In a paper analyzing the use of qualitative case studies in the social sciences, Wilson (1979) lists four factors common to case studies. First, case studies are particularistic; they describe real activities of a specific situation. Next, Wilson says that case studies are holistic; they describe a wide variety of variables and discuss their interrelationships. Case studies are longitudinal; they describe events over time. Finally, Wilson notes that case studies are qualitative; prose, quotes, and sample materials may be used to document the case. Based on these four generic qualities, Wilson goes on to define a case study as

> "...a process of research which tries to describe and analyze some entity in qualitative, complex, and comprehensive terms...as it unfolds over a period of time." (p.448)

The case study, then, has two recognizable parts; the first is descriptive while the second is analytical and diagnostic (Lombard, 1978; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). This paper will use Wilson's definition as a guide in the development of the case study methodology to describe development communication programs. It will focus on the descriptive element of the case study.

Rationale for a Case Study. Before a researcher can fully utilize a particular methodology, a rationale must be provided. In development communication programs a case study methodology is often used for three reasons.

First, a case study provides information on applications of theoretical concerns in the real world (Lombard, 1978; Walton, 1972). As such, Ullman and Krasner (1966) noted that case studies "illustrate procedures and provide a source of ideas as to how

problems may be approached." (p. 45). There is a trend among social scientists to describe activities in their natural setting (Wilson, 1977). This is because of the significant influence of the environment on human events and the divergence of results from laboratory studies of similar phenomenon (Barker, 1968; Willems and Raush, 1969). Kerlinger (1971) notes the realism of the field study and implies that it exists in the case study when he writes that there "can be no complaint of artificiality..." (p. 407).

A case study also provides a large range of detail (Riley, 1963). Rather than focusing on one particular area and selecting a limited number of aspects for examination, a researcher developing a case study gathers and describes a wide array of data. This data allows a researcher to illustrate theoretical concerns and to provide examples.

The second reason for espousing a case study methodology to describe development communication programs is that such a study uncovers relationships (Katz, 1953). Both Kerlinger (1973) and Mouley (1970) respectively argue that field studies and case studies are useful in describing and analyzing relationships. These relationships are what Riley (1963) calls "latent patterns" (p. 69), relations that the object under study may not be aware of completely.

Walton (1972) suggests that a case study methodology uncovers relationships when it

> allows the reader to identify with persons or place himself in role positions in the situation;
>
> captures the affective mood and other dynamic properties of the unfolding situation;
>
> separates the description from the conceptualization and generalization. (p. 77)

Thus the process element of a case study, the describing of relationships, is a second reason for using a case study in reporting a development communication program.

Finally, case study methodology has a heuristic quality. As the case is described and the variables examined, a variety of hypotheses tend to emerge. This heuristic quality links implementation to theory and provides meaning for concepts and documents them in new ways (Bennis, 1978; Ullman and Krasner, 1966). Case study methodology, Mouley (1970) argues, "probably makes its greatest contribution to the advancement of science as a source of hypotheses to be verified by more rigorous investigation" (p. 348).

In summary, there are three main reasons underlying the use of the case study in the area of development communication:

1. to illustrate and provide examples,

2. to uncover relationships, and

3. to develop suggestions for future action.

Limitations of the Methodology. As with any research methodology, the case study has certain limitations. The most important limitations are the number of variables encountered, the precision in description, the tendency to over-emphasize unusual events, and the generalizability of the findings.

The first restriction stems from the multiplicity of variables encountered (Kerlinger, 1973). Since it is a descriptive type of research, a case study tends to produce a plethora of information. Sorting and categorizing the information become extremely difficult.

Because of the complex nature of real events, the quantity of information generated, and the absence of experimental control devices, a case study may be unsystematic in its description (Campbell and Stanley, 1963). Contrasted with experimental and quasi-experimental designs, the lack of precision is a limiting factor.

Case study methodology has a "tendency to overemphasize unusual events or to distort them for dramatic effect..." (Van Dalen, 1973). Given the previously mentioned limitations, the researcher can develop a particular mind-set which "...may blind him to certain significant aspects of the situation" (Mouley, 1970, p. 349). This biased-viewpoint effect (Riley, 1963) might cause the selective recording and skewed analysis of the available information.

Possibly the greatest limitation encountered by the case study is the inability to generalize its findings. This stems from two separate problems: the collection and interpretation of dependable data and the case study methodology itself. Mouley (1970) comments on the readily available data:

> ...when these data were collected, present needs were not anticipated, and as a result, the data were probably not collected and recorded systematically enough to be dependable and understandable in the context of the present problems (p. 351).

Mouley then notes that "obtaining dependable data from which valid interpretations can be derived" (p. 348) is a major problem in using a case study method.

Analyzing and interpreting the data also cause problems. Because the quantity of information generated (Riley, 1963) and the lack of established guidelines (Kennedy, 1979), the synthesis "...must rely heavily on the investigator's judgment, if not intuition, as to...(the information's) relevance and significance" (Mouley, 1970).

Both the methods of collection and interpretation of data limit the case study in its ability to yield generalizations. No direct control of the independent variables takes place in a case study; further randomization is lacking. Methodologically speaking, control and randomization allow for a wider applicability of research findings. Thus the methodology of the case study differs from experimental research (Campbell and Stanley, 1963: Kerlinger, 1973; Kennedy, 1979).

These limitations to the case study method may be lessoned by developing a rigorous framework in which development communication programs can be described.

Method

Development communication case studies were selected based on their a) availability in the general literature, and b) ability to meet Wilson's (1979) criteria of a good case study--particularistic, holistic, longitudinal, and qualitative. Twelve case studies of development communication projects were then examined to determine what descriptive categories were held in common across cases and what new categories emerged. As each case was reviewed, the descriptive categories developed by the particular author or which were self-evident were listed. This listing was then put on a matrix , shown in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Results

The matrix presented in Table 1 indicates that the categories below were mentioned in eleven or more case studies. They are listed in random order.

1. Channels
2. Results
3. Project Design
4. Objectives
5. Audience
6. Background
7. Overview
8. Scope
9. Location
10. Time/duration
11. Message
12. Sector

Other categories mentioned in more than half the case studies include:

1. Organization/administration
2. Sponsorship
3. Evaluation

Nine categories were mentioned in less than half the case studies surveyed.

1. Cost
2. Dissemination
3. Staff
4. Timelines
5. Communication style
6. Research
7. Funding
8. Sources of information
9. References

Discussion

All the models outlined above were designed to describe specific projects. Herein lies both the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Since every model was developed for a particular project, its author(s) and developer(s) felt it to be the most appropriate. For other researchers, however, each model lacks something they believe should be included. An examination of the models indicates that there is general agreeement on the majority of steps which must be included. Most of these steps fall into a general theoretical description of the communication process (source, message, channel, receiver, and feedback[Berlo,1960]; who says what to whom with what effect[Lasswell, 1948]).

Differences among models stem largely from their point of origin rather than from radically divergent methods of case description. For example, the Diaz-Cisneros model (1977)was used to describe a relatively large scale agricultural development project; the Unesco model (1976) was used to study literacy projects; the Manandhar, et al. (1982) model was used to examine a forestry program. All the authors are united by a strong commitment to a complete case study description. However, since there is no standard description each author must originate a new model for a new case.

To overcome some of the limitations of the case study methodology, a generalizable framework for the descriptive phase of development communication case studies is suggested. Of course, generalization of findings depends on the concepts of validity and reliability. If a development communication case study has depicted what it purports to assess, the study can be said to be valid. And if independent observations of the situation would produce similar data, the study can be said to be reliable.

The proposed framwork offers a structure to more systematically describe development communication program in such a way that the case study could be replicated.

On the basis of this review, a case study model is now proposed which takes into account all the categories noted in the previous models. The proposed framework for developing a development communication case study is presented in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 About Here

Four categories have been added to the list which was derived from the analysis of the case study models. These four categories come from the literature of development communication (Bordenaue,1977; Bursusphat,1981; Maglalang, 1976; Woods, 1982,1983).

a. Name (1)--this is the development communication project name and acronym.

b. Pretesting (2)--this is a component of most models of media and message development While pretesting is not often reported, its inclusion in a case study might help other project developers learn processes and approaches to improving communication.

c. Formative evaluation (20)--this also is a part of most models of communication. If formative evaluation is done, the results should be reported.

d. Monitoring (21)--this is the implementation of the formative evaluation, which should detail what changes were made in the program as a result of its actual implementation in the field.

A minor limitation of this current work is that an N of 12 is somewhat small on which to generalize. While this may be true in an extreme experimental model, for the work in developing a case study framework, which is a heuristic device, the N of 12 seems large enough to be both reliable and valid, at this point. In a totally independent study which has recently surfaced, Harun, et al (1978), developed an outline for the case study of communication and information systems in developing countries (Appendix A). The case study categories chosen by these authors parallel the framework under discussion here, and in fact move case study methodology into a more analytical mode.

Summary

A 28 category framework for using the case study methodology to describe a development communication program has been presented. Work remaining to be done to further improve the case study methodology includes:

1. development of models and techniques for analyzing a single case study, and

2. development of techniques for aggregating case study data and then analyzing it.

The purpose of this model is to provide a systematic framework for describing a development communication case study. This framework does not intend to be a tool of analysis; it is, rather, descriptive. Analysis tools would have to be further developed.

Table 1: Case Study Category Matrix

CASE STUDY	Location	Time	Sources of Information	Scope	Sponsorship	Funding	Background	Staff	Audience	Administration/ Organization	Objectives	Project Design	Results	Channels	Costs	Dissemination	Research	Evaluation	Timelines	References	Sector	Communication Style	Messages
Bordenaue 1977	x	x	x	x	x		x		x		x	x	x	x		x		x	x		x		x
Boden 1979	x	x		x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x				x			x		x
Cuca & Pierca 1977	x	x			x				x	x	x	x	x	x			x				x		x
Cuyno 1977	x	x					x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x					x		x
Diaz-Cisneros 1977	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x			x	x	x
Hall 1978	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x				x			x		x
Leslie 1975	x	x		x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x						x		x
Manandhar, et al. 1982	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x			x		x	x	x
Perrett 1982	x	x		x			x		x		x	x	x	x	x			x	x				
Sweeny & Parlato 1982	x	x		x	x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x
Unesco I 1976	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x			x		x
Unesco II 1976	x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x			x		x

Table 2: Proposed Case Study Framework for Describing Development Communication Programs

Category	Description
1. Name	1. The name and acronym of the development communication program
2. Sector	2. The discipline in which the development communication program was undertaken, i.e., agricultural development, health education, forestry
3. Time/duration	3. The project's period of operation, i.e., the beginning and ending times
4. Location	4. The description of the location in which the project is implemented, i.e., country, regions
5. Scale/scope	5. A description of the size of the project, i.e.,national, regional, village, pilot, etc.
6. Sponsorship	6. A description of the organizations responsible for the sponsorship and implementation of the project
7. Funding	7. A listing of the monies put into the development communication project, allocated by year and category if possible
8. Background	8. A description of the origins, history of the problem, genesis of the organizational involvement and reason, and other relevant background factors
9. Administration	9. A description of how the development communication project is administratively lodged into a larger organization, including resources and division of labor
10. Objectives	10. A listing of the stated objectives or goals of the project and of the larger program

11. Audience	11. A description of the target audience(s) of the development communication project
12. Staff	12. A description of the relevent data and backgrounds of the major project staff and their roles
13. Project Design	13. A description of how the development communication project was organized to meets its objectives and a description of the planned activities for the project's development
14. Communication style	14. A description of the communication strategies in terms of message design approaches and channel selection approaches; a description of the way the message and medium are programmed to achieve the project goals
15. Messages	15. A description of the messages designed by the project for the target audience(s)
16. Channels	16. A description of the specific media employed in the communication effort
17. Materials	17. A description of the materials which were developed, i.e, flip charts which show planting calenders
18. Pretesting	18. A description of pretest strategies and results
19. Dissemination	19. A description of the diffusion and utilization strategies, i.e., messages and/or materials actually reaching the target audience(s) (media schedules, extension agent utilization)
20. Formative evaluation	20. A description of any formative evaluation activities that took place in the development communication project

21. Monitoring	21. A description of how any in-process changes derived from pre-testing, formative evaluation, or outside reviews were implemented
22. Results	22. A description of the planned and unplanned outcomes of the development communication project; descriptions of knowledge gains, practices, etc.
23. Costs	23. A description of the financial costs of the project, i.e., cost/audience contacted, cost of buying broadcast time
24. Evaluation	24. A description of the results of any evaluations that were done
25. Timelines	25. A description of the month to month activities of the development communication project
26. Research	26. A description of the results of any research that occurred as part of the project
27. Sources of Information	27. A listing of the sources of information that allowed the case study to be written, i.e.,project reports, site visitations,brochures, interviews
28. References	28. A listing of any published or publically accessable references which describe the case study in any way

APPENDIX A:
DTCP GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING CASE STUDY*

1. Name of organization

2. Basic objectives and goals of the organization

3. Clientele served

4. General description of resources--budget, staff, areas covered, physical facilities, etc.

5. Existing internal and external communication policies within the organization and those external affecting the organization

6. Inventory of current communication activities for the following functions:

   6.1 Serving clientele
   6.2 Feedback from clientele for programme planning
   6.3 Management monitoring, control and coordination
   6.4 Technical (research) information reporting, processing and utilization
   6.5 Formulating overall policies and goals
   6.6 Staff development and relationships
   6.7 Gaining popular suppport and participation
   6.8 To and from other organizations

7. Inventory of communication resources

   7.1 Physical facilities--i.e. meeting rooms, training areas, libraries, data banks, etc.
   7.2 Equipment--i.e. telephones, computers, audio-visual, printing machines, mobile units, etc.
   7.3 Communication training given to staff
   7.4 Finances allocated to communication activities

8. Communication problems observed:

   8.1 Relevance of message content
   8.2 Timing
   8.3 Reaching the incorrect persons
   8.4 Misunderstanding messages by receivers
   8.5 Accuracy of information
   8.6 Responsiveness to feedback
   8.7 Volume of information (overload or insufficient)
   8.8 Appropriateness of communication channel/techniquie/ media selected

* Harun, R., et al., 1978. pp. 7-8.

9. Possible causes of these problems:

   9.1 Communication capabilities of staff
   9.2 Organizational structure
   9.3 Communication policies
   9.4 External pressures
   9.5 Poor (or lack) of communication planning and strategy formulation
   9.6 Availaility of finances for communication activities
   9.7 Physical facilities
   9.8 Communication equipment
   9.9 Sophistication level of message content
   9.10 Sophistication level of channels/techniques/media used
   9.11 Direction of information flows
   9.12 Formal and informal channels misused
   9.13 Perception differences between sender and receiver of message
   9.14 Commitment to communication activities by top administrators
   9.15 Language or dialect used

10. Recommend solutions or course of action for overcoming the problems

11. Executive summary of findings and recommendations

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